

SENATE RESOLUTION
8733

By Senators Zarelli, Benton and Carlson

WHEREAS, History was made on the morning of June 20, 1937, with the landing of Russian aviator, Valery Chkalov, and his crew, Georgy Baidukov and Alexander Belyakov, in their single-engine aircraft ANT-25 at Pearson Army Airfield in Vancouver, Washington; and

WHEREAS, Chkalov completed the first nonstop flight across the North Pole setting a world aviation record by flying for 63 hours and 16 minutes over the North Pole from Schelkovo Air Field near Moscow, Russia, to Vancouver, Washington; and

WHEREAS, In an international feat of great aviation significance, Chkalov set down at the Pearson Airfield in Vancouver, Washington, the oldest continuously operating general aviation airfield in the United States, where he and his crew were greeted by General George C. Marshall, commander of the Vancouver Barracks; and

WHEREAS, Citizens throughout the world were following this first transpolar flight, on radio and in the newspaper, as Valery Chkalov spoke on NBC Radio from the balcony of the stately Victorian-era Army military residence of General Marshall; and

WHEREAS, Chkalov proclaimed that like the Volga and Columbia Rivers which flow on the same planet and ultimately merge into one and the same World Ocean without interfering with one another, "Our peoples...should live in the same world in peace. Our joint efforts should beautify the ocean of human life"; and

WHEREAS, In the intervening years, the polar bridge established by the Chkalov flight has been the basis for numerous visits and exchanges between local residents and citizens and with Valery Chkalov's family and village, and has been kept alive by the long established Vancouver Chkalov Transpolar Flight Committee and, since 1999, the Chkalov Cultural Exchange Committee; and

WHEREAS, In 1975, Vancouver citizens dedicated a monument honoring the bravery of Valery Chkalov and his crew, thus making this flight the only one in the world with commemoratives marking both departure and arrival points; and

WHEREAS, The Russian Federation and many individual Russians have responded with friendship to this expression of international goodwill by visiting the city of Vancouver to lay flowers at the monument and by hosting groups from Vancouver in Russia; and

WHEREAS, February 2, 2004, was the 100th anniversary of Valery Chkalov's birth, and this occasion and events honoring his birth are being held in Russia throughout the year as part of an official "State Event"; and

WHEREAS, The Chkalov Cultural Exchange Committee, Chkalov Transpolar Flight Committee, and the City of Vancouver are planning numerous events in Vancouver throughout the year, and over 200 Russian officials, including a number of famed Russian aviators, high ranking officials of the Russian Federation, and others, will be in Vancouver, Washington, to participate in these events; and

WHEREAS, The City of Vancouver, the Vancouver National Historic Reserve Trust, and Celebrate Freedom, joined by Governor Locke, Lt. Governor Owen, and other officials, have extended to His Excellency Vladimir Putin, president of the Russian Federation, an invitation to deliver the annual General George C. Marshall Lecture in June 2004 in Vancouver;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate hereby acknowledge the historic feat of famed Russian aviator Valery Chkalov and call upon the citizens of the State of Washington to join the citizens of Russia in celebrating the 100th Birthday of Valery P. Chkalov, and extend a warm welcome to all Russian visitors who travel to Vancouver to participate in these events and encourage all Washington citizens to participate.

I, Milton H. Doumit, Jr., Secretary of the Senate,
do hereby certify that this is a true and
correct copy of Senate Resolution 8733,

adopted by the Senate
March 8, 2004

MILTON H. DOUMIT, JR.
Secretary of the Senate